



LOWER HACKENSACK RIVER

A PATH TOWARD A HEALTHIER FUTURE

The Lower Hackensack River, spanning 23 miles from Oradell Dam to Newark Bay, is a vital ecological and recreational asset to the region. This area includes numerous parks, marinas and kayak/canoe launches as well as the Hackensack Meadowlands, a significant and dominant feature of the Lower Hackensack River that includes 5,800 acres of estuarine wetlands. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection supports listing the river as a federal Superfund site as the most comprehensive and expedient way to remediate longstanding contamination of sediments from past industrial discharges and practices.

The Background

Sediments in the river are contaminated with mercury, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and other contaminants. While sources of contamination are numerous as they would be in any urban waterway, the worst of the contamination is believed to have resulted from past discharges from four sites in the watershed that are undergoing remediation through the EPA's Superfund program. They are:

- Ventron/Velsicol site in Carlstadt and Wood-Ridge, a mercury-processing facility that operated from 1929 to 1974.
- Universal Oil Products (Chemical Division) in East Rutherford, which processed chemicals from 1930 to 1979.
- Standard Chlorine in Kearny, which manufactured and processed various chemical products, including mothballs and lead-acid batteries, from about 1916 to 1993, and
- Scientific Chemical Processing in Carlstadt, where various chemical recovery, processing and storage activities took place from about 1941 until 1980.

The Solution

NJDEP supports the addition of the Lower Hackensack River to EPA's National Priorities List as necessary to provide federal resources the state does not have for remediating the river. In addition to making available important funding and technical resources, listing will leverage the ability of the state and federal government to get responsible parties (PRPs) to fund remediation.

Next Steps

The NJDEP is firmly committed to working closely with the EPA through the federal process required for listing the Lower Hackensack River as a Superfund site. This would be the first time a river in New Jersey would be listed as a Superfund cleanup site.

The lower portion of the Hackensack River is all tidally influenced. This area of the river spans 20 municipalities in Bergen and Hudson counties:

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| • River Edge | • Rutherford | • Moonachie |
| • Ridgefield Park | • Secaucus | • North Arlington |
| • Carlstadt | • Bogota | • New Milford |
| • Kearny | • Ridgefield | • North Bergen |
| • Jersey City | • Hackensack | • South Hackensack |
| • Little Ferry | • Teaneck | • Lyndhurst |
| • Oradell | • East Rutherford | |

LOWER HACKENSACK RIVER REGION

